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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000193

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STATE FOR G/TIP, NEA/ARP, DRL

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: OMAN PREPARING TO DRAFT ANTI-TIP LEGISLATION

REF: A. 06 MUSCAT 1119

[1](#)B. 06 MUSCAT 1575

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo for Reasons 1.4 b/d.

[1](#)1. (C) The Ambassador and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Under Secretary Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi had a frank discussion on February 21 about trafficking in persons (TIP) and Oman's lack of progress in addressing the USG's TIP concerns. The Ambassador informed the Under Secretary that the Embassy is in the process of preparing the 2006 TIP report, but that other than some recent labor-related legislation, it had little new information to help Oman improve upon its current Tier II Watch List status. The Ambassador also noted that Oman did not appear to have taken action on the recommendations in Post's TIP action plan, which he had presented to the MFA on July 16, 2006 (ref A).

[1](#)2. (C) Sayyid Badr responded that Oman has taken concrete steps to address TIP, and that the cabinet recently instructed the Ministries of Justice and Legal Affairs to begin drafting anti-TIP legislation. He assured the Ambassador that the Omani government has "moved beyond intentions" regarding TIP, and has recognized that adopting new legislation, as well as strengthening mechanisms to monitor and enforce legal protections, is in Oman's interests and necessary to fulfill its international commitments. The Ambassador urged action on the other suggestions contained in the proposed action plan, e.g. raising public awareness, publishing statistics on trafficking-related convictions, and providing victim assistance services. Sayyid Badr stated that the Ministry of Manpower is working with the Indian Embassy in Muscat to design a circular in multiple languages to help raise workers' awareness about their rights and the services available to them. He added that the Omani government also is building a new, centralized detention center for illegal immigrants, which will provide detainees with modern facilities and services that meet international standards.

[1](#)3. (C) The Ambassador encouraged Oman to make a public statement regarding its anti-TIP actions to help affirm Oman's intentions and accomplishments. While Sayyid Badr suggested that he would discuss this idea with the Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Yousef bin Alawi, he made it clear that Oman's anti-TIP efforts were not related to the USG report and that TIP remained a very sensitive issue. He said that Oman "would not be intimidated" into taking premature actions that circumvent Oman's deliberative process. The Ambassador assured Sayyid Badr that the USG was ready to assist Oman with content for its new law, and provided him with examples of anti-TIP legislation (earlier requested by the MFA) that Oman could use as models. The Ambassador also suggested that Oman consider sending a legal expert to the United States for TIP consultations.

14. (C) Comment: The Omani government appears finally to have realized that it needs to take a more proactive stance in combating TIP. The November 2006 visit of Ambassador Sigma Huda, the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Trafficking in Persons (ref B), may have helped wake-up the Omanis to the fact that TIP is a serious concern of the international community, not just the U.S. (Note: Ambassador Huda's official report has not yet been shared with the Omanis. Post is attempting to obtain its own copy. End note.) Post will continue to encourage and assist the Omani government to address TIP, particularly in its efforts to draft and implement anti-TIP legislation. End comment.
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